

REMARKS

Independent Claims 3, 23 and 24 are presented for consideration.

Independent Claim 3 has been amended to further distinguish Applicant's invention from the cited art. In addition, Claims 23 and 24 have been added to provide an additional scope of protection. Support for the amendments to Claim 3 and new Claims 23 and 24 is provided, for example, on page 19, line 26, *et. seq.*, of the specification and in Figures 10-12B. The presented claims are consonant with the elected species (Species III).

Initially, Claims 17, 19, 20 and 21 were withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. These claims have been cancelled. Similarly, Claims 4, 6, 8, 10 and 11 were indicated as being directed to a non-elected invention, and have thus also been cancelled.

Claims 3 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. It is respectfully submitted that the amendments to Claim 3 as shown above overcome this rejection. Claim 9 has been cancelled. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, is respectfully requested.

Claims 3, 5, 9, 18 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Jackson '636. This rejection, as it applies to Claim 3, is respectfully traversed.

Claim 3 of Applicant's invention relates to a manipulator comprised of first and second contact portions opposing each other and facing a manipulation target object, first

openings at the first contact portion, and second openings at the second contact portion. In addition, fluid control means performs an operation of feeding the manipulation target object by ejecting a fluid from each of at least one of the first openings and at least one of the second openings behind the target object so that the ejected fluids collide to generate a flow which pushes the manipulation target object in a forward direction.

The Jackson patent relates to a fluid transport system for handling and moving objects without requiring direct physical contact. In Figure 4, Jackson shows a conveyor surface 311 having an air valve 350, a valve controller 382 and an air pressure source 380.

In contrast to Applicant's claimed invention, however, Jackson does not teach or suggest, among other features, fluid control means as set forth in Claim 3. In Applicant's claimed invention, the fluid control means feeds the manipulation target object by ejecting the fluid from each of at least one of the first and second openings behind the target object so that the ejected fluids collide to generate the flow which pushes the manipulation target object in a forward direction.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is respectfully requested.

Independent Claims 23 and 24 are also submitted to be patentable over the cited art. Both claims relate to a manipulator that include first and second contact portions and fluid control means for controlling an attitude of a manipulation target object. In Claim 23, fluid is ejected from at least one of first openings at a right side of a center of gravity of the manipulation target object and from at least one of second openings at a left side of the central

gravity of the manipulation target object so as to generate a couple force around the center of gravity of the manipulation target object. In Claim 24 the fluid control means draws a fluid from at least one of first openings at a right side of a center of gravity of the manipulation target object and draws a fluid from at least one of second openings at a left side of a center of gravity of the manipulation target object so as to generate a couple force around the center of gravity of the manipulation target object.

Claims 23 and 24 are thus also submitted to be allowable.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of this application is deemed to be in order and such action is respectfully requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

/Scott D. Malpede/

Scott D. Malpede
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 32,533

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200
SDM/vnm

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